

Applicant appreciates the courtesies extended to Applicant's representatives by Examiners Rosenthal and Price in the August 5, 2002, personal interview. The points discussed are incorporated into the following remarks.

The attached Appendix includes marked-up copies of each rewritten claim (37 C.F.R. §1.121(c)(1)(ii)).

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; (c) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; (d) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (e) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

I. Claim 5 Satisfies All Formal Requirements

The Office Action objects to claim 5 because of an informality. Claim 5 has been amended in accordance with the Examiner's recommendations to obviate this objection. Withdrawal of the objection to claim 5 is respectfully requested.

II. The Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 1 and 3-5 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,222,319 to Yamato (hereinafter "Yamato"); and rejects claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Yamato. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Yamato does not disclose, teach or suggest a reel seat for a fishing rod comprising, inter alia, a trigger protruding from the lower portion of the circumferential surface of the oblong pipe-shaped body at a fixed position and angle, the trigger having a front surface, the

front surface of the trigger sloping substantially toward the downward and backward direction relative to a rear end of the lower portion of the circumferential surface of the oblong pipe-shaped body, as claimed in independent claim 1.

Further, Yamato does not disclose, teach or suggest a fishing rod comprising, inter alia, a trigger protruding from a position opposite to a reel foot placing surface at a fixed position and angle, the trigger having a front surface, the front surface of the trigger sloping substantially downward and backward relative to a rear end of a lower portion of the reel seat, as claimed in claim 5.

Instead, Yamato, as shown in Figures 1 and 4, teaches a fishing rod having a conventional trigger 2 extending generally at a right angle relative to the body of the fishing rod. The front surface of the trigger 2 in Yamato slopes substantially toward the downward and forward direction relative to the body of the fishing rod.

The Office Action, at pages 2-3, admits that in the device disclosed in Yamada, only "the front surface of the trigger which is closest to the rod slopes toward the downward and backward direction relative to a rear end or the lower portion of the [fishing rod] body." (emphasis added) This is different than the claimed invention, as claimed in independent claims 1 and 5.

Further, Yamato does not disclose, teach or suggest a trigger having a length such that at least two of an average size adult user's fingers can be placed thereon, as claimed in independent claims 1 and 5.

The length of the trigger in Yamato, as shown in Figures 1 and 4, is short such that it can be held by a forefinger of an average size adult. Further, the trigger in Yamato, as shown in Figures 1, 2 and 4, is located substantially just under a thumb touching back the spool of a reel. The trigger shown in Yamato, like most conventional triggers, has common faults like over-burdening a user's wrist and elbow in palming.

The claimed invention provides for a trigger that extends or slopes in a substantially downward and backward direction relative to a rear end of the lower portion of the circumferential surface of the oblong piped shape body of the reel seat. Further, as recited in the claimed invention, the trigger has a length such that at least two of an average size adult user's fingers can be placed thereon.

Therefore, Yamato does not disclose, teach or suggest a trigger having the features recited in independent claims 1 and 5.

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that Yamato does not disclose, teach or suggest the claimed invention, as claimed in claims 1-5.

For at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 5 are distinguishable over the applied art. Claims 2-4, which depend from claim 1, are likewise distinguishable over the applied art for at least the reasons discussed as well as for additional features they recite. Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

For at least the reasons discussed above, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:
Appendix

Date: November 15, 2002

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<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>
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APPENDIX

Changes to Claims:

The following are marked-up versions of the amended claims:

1. (Twice Amended) A reel seat for a fishing rod that includes a fishing rod body and that defines a downward and backward direction comprising:

an oblong pipe-shaped body through which the fishing rod body passes, the oblong pipe-shaped body defining a circumferential surface with a top portion and a lower portion;

a reel foot;

a reel foot placing surface formed on the top portion of the circumferential surface of the oblong pipe-shaped body,

a movable front hood and a fixed rear hood, that attach the reel foot to the reel foot placing surface; and

a trigger protruding from the lower portion of the circumferential surface of the oblong pipe-shaped body at a fixed position and angle, the trigger having a front surface, the front surface of the trigger sloping substantially toward the downward and backward direction relative to a rear end of the lower portion of the circumferential surface of the oblong pipe-shaped body and having a length such that at least two of an average size adult user's fingers can be placed thereon.

5. (Twice Amended) A fishing rod comprising:

a fishing rod body, that defines a downward and backward direction, on which line guides are mounted;

a ~~real~~-reel seat;

a handle that extends backward from a position of the reel seat; and

a trigger protruding from a position opposite to a reel foot placing surface at a fixed position and angle, the trigger having a front surface, the front surface of the trigger sloping substantially downward and backward relative to a rear end of a lower portion of the reel seat and having a length such that at least two of an average size adult user's fingers can be placed thereon.